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Shubhada Kambli
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Commissioner Katie Dykes
Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street Hartford, CT 06106

November 15, 2019

Dear Commissioner Dykes,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer input on Executive Order 3. The City of Hartford strongly recommends the engagement of diverse stakeholder groups throughout the climate planning process led by the Governor's Council on Climate Change. We therefore appreciate two key questions that the Council is considering, including:

- *How will we ensure diverse stakeholders are engaged throughout the planning, development, and implementation of adaptation and resilience strategies?*
- *How can we prioritize climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies that protect vulnerable communities disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change?*

As it relates to the thematic areas of the working groups, we strongly support the creation of a working group dedicated to equity and environmental justice. In addition, we ask that you consider the GC3's objectives and deliverables not just by soliciting feedback from residents, nonprofits, businesses, and local leaders, but by organizing the process in such a way that allows stakeholders - including our most vulnerable and underrepresented residents - to lead the way. This may mean appointing and training youth and community ambassadors, and offering leadership training concurrently with the GC3 meetings in partnership with grassroots organizations.

Critically, we would like to see the equity working group address the fact that Connecticut has the third highest residential electricity prices in the country, behind Hawaii and Alaska. Given how high household utility bills can be, we also believe it is critical for the GC3 to act on transparency regulations that require landlords to share utility bill data with renters before lease. This would protect our most vulnerable residents from unexpected energy bills that contribute to a cycle of poverty. These types of regulations would also transform the housing market by creating an environment in which knowledge empowers the consumer to make energy-efficient choices that support reduced household costs.

Energy efficiency standards and transparency regulations would also address the "split incentive" issue, where a landlord won't pay for energy upgrades because the tenant pays the bills. With additional transparency, consumers can make choices that drive improvements in the residential housing stock.

To further address root causes of environmental injustice, income inequality, and inequity, we also ask the Council to think about a working group that considers a pathway to work in the energy sector. This may include training through debt-free community college or other course of study. In this way, the GC3 can use current and future legislation and programs to create a level playing field for opportunities in the environmental field.

In Hartford, we have already seen exceptional local environmental businesses settle here; and we know that state policies, regulations, and standards can help ensure that all residents are ready for work in a green and circular economy. We would like to ensure that the educational standards upheld by the state are aligned with the market, allowing residents to be educated, trained, and employed in Connecticut.

We therefore ask that the GC3 consider modifying the name of the Equity and Environmental Justice working group to Equity, Education, and Environmental Justice.

For additional working group themes, we are hopeful that the measures outlined by the Governor's Council on Climate Change will result in market transformation, and encourage a new class of entrepreneurs and businesses to grow and set up shop in the state.

Towards this end, we also advocate for ensuring that minority-owned and women-owned businesses benefit from state-level policies and regulations by including set-asides or similar considerations for these businesses.

We would also like to see green and equitable jobs as an area of focus under a specific working group entitled Market Transformation.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to offer input on Executive Order 3, and we hope the GC3 will consider these recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shubhada Kambli', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shubhada Kambli

Sustainability Coordinator